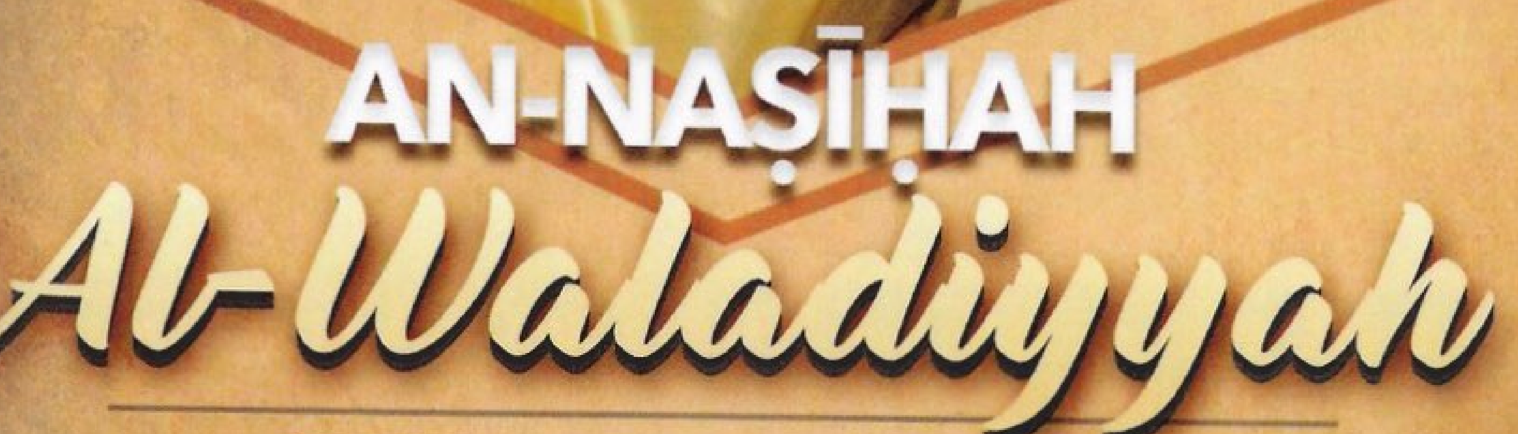
النصيحة الولدية

وصية أبي وليد الباجي

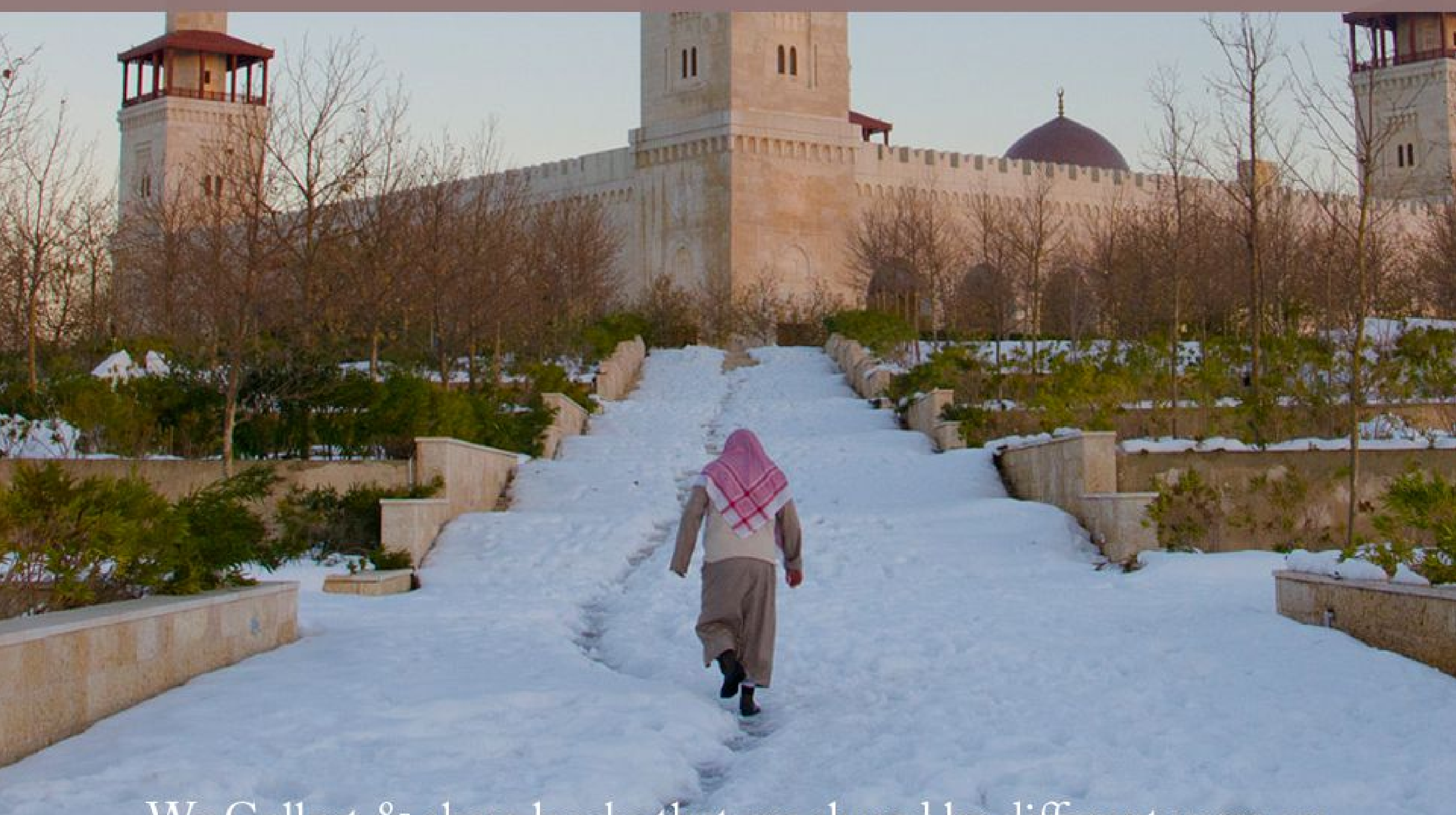


AN-NAṢĪḤAH Al-Waladiyyah

FATHERLY ADVICE:

The Advice of Abū Walīd al-Bāji to his Sons

Abū Walīd al-Bāji



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Transliteration Table

Consonants

ء	'	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	'	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

Vowels

Short	ـَ	a	ـِ	i	ـُ	u
Long	ـَا	ā	ـِي	ī	ـُو	ū
Diphthongs	ـَيْ	ay/ai	ـَوْ	aw		

Glyphs

ﷺ *Ṣallāllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* (May Allāh's praise & salutations be upon him)

عليهم السلام *'Alayhim as-salām* (Peace be upon them)

رضي الله عنهم *Raḍiyallāhu 'anhum* (May Allāh be pleased with them)

رحمه الله *Raḥimahullāh* (May Allāh have mercy on him)

عز وجل *'Azza wa-Jall* (The Mighty and Majestic)

CONTENTS



Introduction[1]

We praise You, our Lord, for the righteous offspring You have blessed us with, and the support You gave us educating and raising them as You commanded us:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا ﴾

O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire (Hell).

[Sūrah at-Taḥrīm 66:6]

All praise be to Allāh from beginning to end. All praise be to Allāh for every moment.

We send our prayers and peace upon our Messenger, may Allāh grant him blessings and peace, the best of educators and fathers. He encouraged us to take care of the responsibilities that Allāh made incumbent upon us. He said:

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْؤولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، فَالأَمِيرُ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْؤولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ، وَهُوَ مَسْؤُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ

[1] By Ibrāhīm Bājis 'Abdul-Majīd.

عَلَى بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَهِيَ مَسْؤُولَةٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهَا.

All of you are shepherds and each of you is responsible for his flock. The leader is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. A man is the shepherd of the people of his house and he is responsible over his flock. A woman is the shepherd of her husband's house and she is responsible over her flock.[2]

To proceed:

There is nothing more beautiful in a man's eyes than seeing his righteous child gradually grow and develop due to his hard work and supervision, like a small plant growing into a strong, fruit-bearing tree.

Mankind bases their lives on providing for and protecting their children. They secure food and clothing for them. They are made happy by their children's happiness, and saddened by their sadness. A man is pleased to see his child following a good path and it scares him when his child rejects that path, so he is continually advising his child in the hope that he won't become misguided and led away from the path that he has drawn out for him.

The Muslim father has a huge responsibility to teach his children the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ and his brilliant biography, the biographies of the Salaf aṣ-Ṣāliḥ, and the *fitrah* (natural inclination) that Allāh created within mankind. Therefore, these are the sources that the Muslim man must employ for the best education of his children.

In Islamic history, we have many examples of fathers teaching their children, the best of which is the story told in the Noble Qur'ān of the lessons and advice imparted by the righteous man, Luqmān, upon his son. Anything that is good, he guided him to it, and anything that is bad, he warned him from it. Therefore, his advice encompassed all that a person would need in this life and the next:

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[2] Reported by al-Bukhāri and Muslim.

1) The first thing that a Muslim must attend to when educating his children is the correct *'aqīdah* (belief system), the *'aqīdah* of *tawḥīd* (monotheism):

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

And (remember) when Luqmān said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allāh. Verily! Joining others in worship with Allāh is a great *ẓulm* (wrong) indeed."

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:13]

2) Then you teach them *'ibādah* (worship), the most important of which is the *ṣalāh* (the prayer):

﴿ يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ﴾

O my son! Perform *aṣ-ṣalāh*.

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:17]

3) Once the *'aqīdah* is sound and Allāh is being worshipped the way He should be worshipped, then the next lesson is that, when calling [the people] to Allāh, a person must be patient and willing to tolerate the trials and tribulations that arise from that:

﴿ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ ﴾

Enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you.

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:17]

4) The caller to the truth must have a connection based on love and mercy with those that he calls, and the most important of those people is one's parents, even if they disbelieve:

﴿ وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ

وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾
وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا
تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ
إِلَيَّ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years. Give thanks to Me and to your parents; unto Me is the final destination. But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:14-15]

5) The caller to the truth must display praiseworthy character, lofty morals, and good manners. He should never be arrogant and never look down on others:

﴿ وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴾

And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allāh likes not each arrogant boaster.

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:18]

This is a comprehensive testament of advice encompassing *'aqīdah*, *'ibādah*, *da'wah* (conveying the message of Islām), human relationships, etiquette, and manners.

The following treatise is the advice that Abū Walīd al-Bāji wrote for his two sons so that, if he died, he knew that he had left something behind to guide them along the path that would lead to success in this life and the next.

Reading through this treatise, we will see that Abū Walīd's advice closely mirrors Luqmān's methodology, as mentioned in the Qur'ān.

The Author's Biography[3]

He is Abū Walīd Sulaymān bin Khalaf bin Sa'd bin Ayyūb bin Wārith al-Bāji. His forefathers originated from Badajoz, Spain, then they moved to the city of Bejar.

He was born in 403 AH, and he belonged to a religious and knowledgeable family. His father was a scholar and successful businessman in al-Qayrawān. His father had studied under Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Qabri in Cordoba and impressed the *shaykh* enough that the *shaykh* allowed him to marry his daughter, Abū Walīd's mother.

His mother was a *faqīhah* in her own right, having also studied under her father, and her brother was the *muḥaddith* Abū Shākir 'Abdul-Wāḥid bin Muḥammad.

One of his brothers was the *imām* of a *masjid* in Zaragoza and another was a famous soldier.

Abū Walīd al-Bāji was raised in an environment of knowledge and piety, so he began his education at an early age, until he emerged a scholar of many different Islamic sciences, such as *ḥadīth*, *jarḥ wa*

[3] By Ibrāhīm Bājis 'Abdul-Majīd.

ta'dīl, and *fiqh*.

He studied under some of the greatest scholars of Spain and other areas to which he had traveled. Abū Walīd spent 13 years traveling to seek knowledge. He traveled to Makkah and Madīnah, Baghdad, Damascus, and Egypt, among others. The most famous of his teachers were Shaykh Yūnus bin Mughīth, Makki bin Abī Ṭālib, Abū Dharr al-Harwi, al-Ḥasan bin Muḥammad Jumay', Abuṭ-Ṭayyab aṭ-Ṭabari, Abū Ja'far as-Samnāni, and others.

His students included al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādi, Abū Bakr at-Tartūshi, Abū 'Umar bin 'Abdul-Barr, Abū 'Alī aṣ-Ṣadfi, Abū 'Abdillāh al-Ḥumaydi, and many others.

He authored many books on various sciences. In *'aqīdah,* he wrote *At-Tasdīd ilā Ma'rifah Ṭarīq at-Tawḥīd;* in *fiqh,* he wrote *Al-Muqtabis min 'Ilm Imām Mālik bin Anas*; in *uṣūl al-fiqh,* he wrote *Iḥkām al-Fuṣūl fī Aḥkām al-Uṣūl;* in *ḥadīth,* he wrote *Al-Muntaqā fī Sharḥ al-Muwaṭṭa';* and so on.

He died in 474 AH in Almeria, at the age of 71, and he was prayed over by his son.

The Author's Introduction

O my sons! May Allāh guide you, grant you success, and protect you from mistakes. May He bless you with the best of the *dunyā* and the Hereafter and keep you away from their perils by His mercy. Once you both had reached an age when the obligations of faith became incumbent upon you, and I realized that you had both reached an age at which one could understand the lesson and the guidance and benefit from learning and knowledge, it became my duty to give you my last testament. It became my duty to pass my advice on to you and impart your education, training, guidance, and understanding before death takes me away from you both. If Allāh blesses me with a long life, then there will be many more opportunities for advice, teaching, and guidance from me, and my success comes only from Allāh. Upon Him alone I rely, and upon Him alone, let those who would rely indeed rely. Your hearts and your heads are in His hands.

However, if—as I believe is the case—my time is near, then what I have written here for you both is my last testament and my advice, and if you act upon it, you will be firm upon the *manhaj* of the Salaf aṣ-Ṣāliḥ. You will succeed in the most profitable trade. You will obtain the best of the *dunyā* and the Hereafter. You will be blessed with Allāh's protection in your religion and your *dunyā*. He will guard

your life and your return to Him. I entrust all of your affairs to Him, and He is sufficient for me and the best disposer of your affairs.

No One Gives Better Advice than a Father to His Son

Know that no one will give you better advice than me, and no one is more concerned for you than me. And no one else on this earth can honor me better than the both of you, and there is nothing that will raise my status in the affairs of the religion and the *dunyā* more than you.

The Obligation of Obeying a Father's Advice

The least you must do is lend an ear to what I have to say, heed my lessons, understand my guidance and advice, know with certainty that I would never forbid you from something good or command you with something bad, walk the path that I make clear for you, and represent the example that I set for you.

The Righteousness of the Author's Family

Know that, by Allāh's excellence, our family has been blessed with righteousness, piety, decency, and virtuosity. From the sons of Ayyūb bin Wārith, may Allāh forgive us and them, came our great-grandfather, Sa'd, and from the sons of Sa'd came Sulaymān, Khalaf, 'Abdur-Raḥmān, and Aḥmad. The most righteous, religious, God-fearing, and pious was your grandfather Khalaf. Despite his stature and wealth, he was ascetic and focused his time on worship and seclusion until the day Allāh called him back.

The Author's Brothers

Then from the sons of Khalaf came your uncles: 'Alī, 'Umar, Muḥammad, Ibrāhīm, and your father, Sulaymān. Your uncles were known for performing Ḥajj, *jihād*, righteousness, and modesty up until they died, may Allāh forgive us and them.

It seems that I am the last of them, carrying on their legacy, and now I am passing that legacy on to you. Do not take any path other than theirs, and do not be pleased with anything less than what they achieved. If you can do better, then lead the way yourselves and build upon the legacy they left behind. Otherwise, at the very least, do not fall short of their example.

First Piece of Advice: Belief in Allāh

The first thing that I advise you with is that which Ibrāhīm and Ya'qūb advised their sons:

﴿ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴾

"O my sons, indeed Allāh has chosen for you the (true) religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims."

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:132]

And I forbid you from what Luqmān forbade his son:

﴿ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

"O my son, do not worship others alongside Allāh. Worshipping others alongside Allāh is a great injustice."

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:13]

I add to that my own advice and repeat it in order to connect you to this religion that Allāh has blessed us with and make you hold fast to it, so that nothing from the affairs of the *dunyā* causes you to make the mistake of sacrificing your souls at the expense of your religion. And what about the *dunyā*? Any enjoyment you may derive from it will not avail you when you have to spend eternity in the Fire, and no harm will hurt you once you enter Paradise for eternity.

﴿ وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islām, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter, he will be one of the losers.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:85]

Hope for Paradise for Those That Believe in This Religion

If you both die upon this religion that Allāh has chosen for you, then I hope that we will meet where we will never have to fear separation ever again. And Allāh the Exalted knows my desire and aspiration for that, just as He knows my concerns that either of you should be overcome by sins and tribulations that would earn Allāh's anger on you, make Hell permissible for you, and obligate an eternity in the Fire. Then you would never meet with the believers due to your past acts, and your righteous forefathers would be of no avail to you on a day when:

﴿ لَّا يَجْزِي وَالِدٌ عَن وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَن وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغَرُورُ ﴾

No father can avail anything for his son, nor a son avail anything for his father. Verily, the promise of Allāh is true; let not then this (worldly) present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver (the Shayṭān) deceive you about Allāh.

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:33]

Categories of Advice

My advice to you can be split into two parts:

1) The first is concerning the affairs of the *sharī'ah*; I clarify for you everything you must know from it, and in this category, there is a warning for that which will follow it.

2) The second is concerning what you must be in this life and how you must handle your affairs.

Part One of the Advice

Belief in the Pillars of Īmān (Faith)

Hence, the first category begins with belief in Allāh ﷻ, His angels, His Books, His messengers, and belief in His legislations, and none of that will be of any benefit if not accompanied by action. And holding on to the Book of Allāh is the pinnacle of that.

Memorizing the Qur'ān and Acting Upon It

Perseverance upon memorizing and reciting the Qur'ān and constantly reflecting on its meanings and signs, performing its commandments, and abstaining from its prohibitions and warnings.

Holding Fast to the Qur'ān and Sunnah

It is reported from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that he said:

تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ مَا إِنْ أَخَذْتُمْ بِهِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَ سُنَّتِي. عَضُّوا عَلَيهَا بالنواجذ.

I have left among you that which, if you hold fast to it, you shall not

go astray after I have left you: the Book of Allāh and my Sunnah. So hold fast to it with your molar teeth.[4]

Obedience to the Prophet ﷺ and Loving Him

The Prophet ﷺ was merciful and compassionate with the believers, and he used to advise them. So accept his advice and act on it, affirm your love for him in your heart, be content with the knowledge that he brought, follow his Sunnah with submission to him and obedience to his rulings, and persevere upon seeking knowledge of his Sunnah and manners. Indeed, love for him leads to goodness and saves one from destruction and evil.

Loving the Ṣaḥābah

Nourish your hearts with love for all of the Ṣaḥābah, especially for the pure Imāms from among them: Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and 'Alī, may Allāh be pleased with them and benefit us with our love for them. Make excuses for what occurred between them, and believe in what has been narrated from them. Indeed, it is reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

لاَ تَسُبُّوا أَصْحَابِي لاَ تَسُبُّوا أَصْحَابِي فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْفَقَ مِثْلَ أُحُدٍ ذَهَبًا مَا أَدْرَكَ مُدَّ أَحَدِهِمْ وَلاَ نَصِيفَهُ.

Do not speak ill of my Companions, do not speak ill of my Companions! By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, if one of you spent the amount of gold equivalent to Mount Uḥud, it would not amount to as much as a handful of one of them, or even half of it.[5]

Any of them that performed even half a handful of gold worth of good deeds, then it would be equal to a mountain of gold the size of Mount Uḥud, so how can one measure their excellence or try to match them in good deeds? And all of them spent generously in the

[4] Reported by Mālik in *Al-Muwaṭṭa'* (2/899) and al-Ḥākim in *Al-Mustadrak* (1/93).

[5] Reported by al-Bukhāri (3673) and Muslim (2540 & 2541).

way of Islām ﷺ.

Reverence for the Scholars and Following their Example

After the Sahābah, one must revere the Tābi'īn,[6] and then the Imāms and scholars that followed them, may Allāh have mercy upon them. Extol their virtues, emulate them, accept their guidance, follow in their footsteps, memorize their sayings, and believe in them.

Performing the Prayer

Perform the prayer, because it is a pillar of the religion and the *sharī'ah* and the most important of the obligations in regard to purifying oneself for it, paying attention to its time, completing its recitation, completing its *rukū'* and *sujūd*, remaining in *khushū'*[7] throughout its duration, facing the *qiblah*, and all the other rulings and manners that relate to congregational prayers and the *masājid*. Indeed, it is the sign of the believers, the way of the righteous, and the path of the pious.

Paying Zakāh

Next, you must pay the *zakāh* due on your wealth, and you must not delay it. Do not be miserly if it is a lot and do not be neglectful if it is only a small amount. Give from the best of your wealth and be generous in your measure, because Allāh is the Most Generous. And give gladly, knowing with certainty that it is a blessing and a purification of your wealth. Give to those that deserve it, not those you love. Do not give according to your desires, mitigating the clear commandments.

---

[6] The generation after the Ṣaḥābah.

[7] Focus and humility during the prayer.

Fasting Ramaḍān

Next, you must fast the month of Ramaḍān, because it is a private form of worship and obedience to the Lord. During Ramaḍān, you must be more mindful of your speech, increase in good deeds, guard against unnecessary mistakes, and take advantage of its days and nights. And follow its fast with its prayer, and it is the Sunnah to perform *i'tikāf*.[8]

Ḥajj and 'Umrah

Next is Ḥajj to Allāh's sacred House for those that are able. Performing the Ḥajj is an obligation, and it is reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

الْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلاَّ الْجَنَّةُ.

The reward of Ḥajj *mabrūr* (accepted by Allāh) is nothing less than Paradise.[9]

Jihād (Striving) for Allāh's Cause

Next is *jihād* for Allāh's cause if you are able, or supporting others that can if you yourself cannot.

These are the pillars of Islām's obligations and the pillars of belief. Preserve them and rush to perform them, and you will acquire a great benefit and reward. Do not neglect Allāh's rights and commands regarding them, lest you meet your destruction alongside the losers and become regretful like those who fell short.

Seeking Knowledge

Know that both of you will only be able to meet these obligations and their requirements if Allāh blesses you with knowledge, which is the foundation of goodness. So seek knowledge! It is a source of

[8] Staying in the *masjid* for the last 10 days of Ramaḍān.

[9] Reported by al-Bukhāri (1373) and Muslim (1349).

richness for the one who seeks it, strength for the one who carries it, and the greatest reason for success in the Hereafter. Knowledge protects you from doubts and corrects your acts of worship. How many people distance themselves from their Lord thinking that they are doing something that will draw them near to Him, and instead they commit the greatest of sins? Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾

Say (O Muḥammad): "Shall We tell you the greatest losers in respect to their deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds!"

[Sūrah al-Kahf 18:103-104]

And He the Exalted said:

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾

Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of knowledge who will understand.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:9]

And He the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ﴾

It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allāh.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:28]

And He the Exalted said:



Allāh will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge.

[Sūrah al-Mujādilah 58:11]

The Excellence of Knowledge

Knowledge is a path that leads its companion to happiness, and it does not in any way take away from his status and honor. A little of it is beneficial, while a lot of it raises a person's stature. It is a treasure that is always pure and increases the more you share it. It cannot be stolen, and you do not have to fear its security from any thief or warrior.

The Status of the Scholars

Look at the status of any of the classes of people you choose, and the level of any type of person that you will. Do you see anyone of a higher status or level than the scholars? They are needed by leaders and subjects alike. Their guidance is sought by the despicable and the dignified. Their opinions are referenced regarding worldly affairs, such as legal rulings, valid contracts, sales, and other transactions. They are turned to regarding religious affairs, such as what is required for the prayer, *zakāh*, and fasting, and the permissible and the forbidden. Along with that, they have security among the citizens and enjoy a position of favor in every level of society.

Knowledge is an ally that will never desert its companion, and its wearer cannot disrobe from its beauty. Every ally, no matter how powerful, and every sanctuary, no matter how great—if one leaves the alliance of his ally or exits the sanctuary of his country, then one will lose stature and safety. But not the person who possesses knowledge, because his stature accompanies him wherever he goes; it precedes him to every horizon and every land, and it remains after he has gone for the rest of time.

The Best Knowledge is Knowledge of the Sharīʿah

The best knowledge is knowledge of the *sharīʿah*. The best of that is for those who are blessed to be able to recite the Qur'ān beautifully and memorize the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ while knowing which are authentic and which are weak. Then he should learn *uṣūl al-fiqh*, so he can understand the Book and the Sunnah. Then he should learn the sayings of the *fuqahā'* and the issues of *fiqh* that have been reported from the scholars. Then he should practice using the methods of analogy and rating the authenticity of proofs and evidences. This is the ultimate goal and the highest level.

Understanding of the Religion

Whoever is unable to do that, then, after memorizing the Qur'ān and the narrations of *aḥādīth*, he should read the issues covered by Imām Mālik رحمه الله, because if a person is only going to read one book, then that is the most beneficial of the books that stand alone in terms of *fiqh*. We single out the *madhhab* of Imām Mālik because he was an Imām of *ḥadīth* and an Imām of analogy, no other scholar covered the breadth of topics that his *madhhab* covered, and he answered many questions concerning both *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* at a level befitting an Imām. The only scholars to match him in the amount of issues and branches clarified and explained are Abū Ḥanīfah and ash-Shāfiʿi, but neither were Imāms in terms of *ḥadīth*.[10]

The Forbiddance from Reading the Books of Manṭiq (Logic) and Philosophy

Beware of reading anything from the books of *manṭiq* and philosophy, because they are founded on disbelief, opposition to the *sharīʿah*,

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[10] The *shaykh* رحمه الله says this out of love for his Māliki *madhhab*, and we agree that the Imām of the land of *hijrah*, Imām Mālik bin Anas رحمه الله was a great Imām, and we agree that he was a sea of knowledge regarding *fiqh* and *ḥadīth*, but we also affirm the status of the other Imāms in terms of *fiqh* and *ḥadīth*, such as Sufyān ath-Thawri, al-Awzāʿi, Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, ash-Shāfiʿi, Abū Ḥanīfah, and many others. They are all Imāms and *mujtahidūn*. We accept their rulings unless the *sharīʿah* texts contradict them. For further benefit, see *Jazīl al-Mawāhib*.

and separation.

Reading the Books of Manṭiq Only After Becoming Knowledgeable in the Religion

I warn you from reading these books until you have read the speech of the scholars concerning the misguided understanding, doubts, and mistakes contained in these books. Otherwise, I fear that, without knowledge to protect you from and refute these doubts, they may take hold in your hearts. Because of this, many of the early and latter scholars rejected reading their books for those who have not reached a level of knowledge and understanding, out of the same fear that I have for you.

If I knew that you had reached a high level of knowledge, understanding, and ability, I would encourage you to read these books so that you may realize their weakness and the feebleness of those that believe in and are deceived by them. Reading these books, you will realize the ugliness of their tricks and the weakness of their arguments and amusing stories that they use to deceive those without knowledge.

Because of that, if you were to meet one of them, you would find that they possess no knowledge, yet they claim that they have perfected their knowledge. Rather, they have only perfected their ignorance.

Commanding Good and Forbidding Evil

It is obligatory upon you to command the good and be from the people known for their goodness. It is obligatory upon you to forbid evil and to avoid the people known for their evil.

Obeying the Ruler in What is Permissible

Obey the leader whom Allāh has put in charge of your affairs, as long as he does not call you to sin, in which case you must refuse but strive to be obedient in everything else.

Maintaining Honesty and Avoiding Lies

It is obligatory upon you to be honest, for indeed it is beautiful, and beware of lying, for indeed it is shameful. Whoever is known for their honesty is praised when he speaks, but the one known for his lying is abandoned and reprimanded even when silent. The mildest punishment for the liar is that he is not believed even when telling the truth. Allāh the Exalted did not describe anyone as a liar except as a reproach for him, and he did not describe anyone as honest except as a praise for him.

Fulfilling the Trust

It is obligatory upon you to fulfill the trust and beware of being disloyal. Fulfill the trust of those you have entrusted, and do not betray those who betray you. And fulfill the covenants—you are responsible for your covenants.

Being Fair in Measurements

Be fair in your measurements, because giving less is abhorrent. It does not save wealth to cheat others; rather, it lowers a person's religion and status.

Forbiddance of Taking Part in Shedding Innocent Blood

Beware of supporting the shedding of blood with your words or taking part in the shedding of blood. A person will always have opportunities for forgiveness as long as he does not dip his hands or tongue in the blood of a Muslim. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا
وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein, and the wrath and the

curse of Allāh are upon him, and a great punishment is prepared for him.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:93]

Abstaining from Fornication

Avoiding forbidden sexual intercourse is from the manners of the noble people. Fornication exposes a person in the *dunyā* and punishes them in the Hereafter. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَا ۖ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ﴾

And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is an immorality and an evil way.

[Sūrah al-Isrā' 17:32]

Avoiding Alcohol

Beware of drinking alcohol, because it is the mother of the major sins. It emboldens the drinker to commit sins. Indeed, Allāh forbade it in his powerful Book—He said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴾

The Shayṭān only wants to cause animosity and hatred between you through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allāh and from prayer. So will you not abstain?

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:91]

It should be sufficient for you to know that alcohol removes the ability to think and it weakens intellects, and even some of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times refused to drink it, so as not to diminish their dignity. So beware of even coming close to it and defiling yourself

with its filth. Indeed, Allāh described it as such and compared it to *al-anṣāb*[11] and *al-azlām*[12]:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

O you who believe, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone altars [to other than Allāh], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of the Shayṭān, so avoid it that you may be successful.

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:90]

The Forbiddance of Ribā

Beware of *ribā*! Indeed, Allāh the Exalted forbade it and threatened with a declaration of war those who do not turn away from it in repentance. He the Almighty said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧٨﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۖ وَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٩﴾ ﴾

O you who believe, fear Allāh and give up what remains (due to you) of interest, if you are (truly) believers. And if you do not, then be informed of a war (against you) from Allāh and His Messenger. But if you repent, you may have your principal—thus you do no wrong, nor are you wronged.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:278-279]

[11] Sacrificing for other than Allāh.

[12] Using arrows for fortunetelling.

Allāh the Exalted also said:

﴿ يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴾

Allāh will destroy *ribā* and will give increase for *ṣadaqāt* (deeds of charity, alms, etc.). And Allāh likes not the disbelievers, sinners.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:276]

Abstaining from Consuming the Orphan's Wealth

Do not consume anyone's wealth without a right to do so, and beware of the orphan's wealth, because Allāh ﷻ said:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا ۖ وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا ﴾

Verily, those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only a fire into their bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire!

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:10]

Encouragement to Seek the Permissible Things

It is obligatory upon you to seek out the things that are permissible and shun the things that are forbidden, and if the permissible things are not available to you, then resort to the things that are unclear.

The Forbiddance of Oppression

Beware of oppression, because oppression is darkness on the Day of Judgment. The oppressor possesses vile manners and angers the creation.

A Warning from Carrying Tales

Beware of tale-carrying, because the one who carries tales is the first to be hated, and the Prophet ﷺ said:

لاَ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ قَتَّاتٌ.

The tale-carrier will not enter Paradise.[13]

The Forbiddance of Envy

Beware of envy, because it is a disease that will destroy the one it inhabits, and it ruins the one that follows it.

Avoiding Obscene Acts

Beware of obscene acts, because Allāh forbade them in private and public, [and He forbade] sins and injustice.

The Forbiddance of Backbiting

Beware of backbiting, because it destroys good deeds, increases bad deeds, distances one from the Creator, and angers the creation.

The Forbiddance of Arrogance

Beware of arrogance, because the one who possesses arrogance is subject to Allāh's anger, and in His displeasure, he will meet his end.

The Forbiddance of Miserliness

Beware of miserliness. Indeed, there is no disease more dangerous—your religion is not safe from it and you will never earn any respect with it.

[13] Reported by al-Bukhāri (6056) and Muslim (105).

Obeying Allāh in Private and Public

Beware of the back alleys where you are hidden from sight, lest you begin to display every characteristic you hate; so keep away from that. And don't spend time in private with those people who act lewdly in public.

Fairness in Judgment

If either of you are blessed to reach a position of responsibility to provide judgments or *fatāwā* (religious verdicts), then you must be the embodiment of justice. You must avoid oppression and deceit, because the oppressor opposes Allāh's judgments, lies about His statements, changes His *sharī'ah*, and transgresses against His creation. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴾

And whoever does not judge by what Allāh has revealed, then it is they who are the defiantly disobedient.

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:47]

It was reported that all of mankind are Allāh's children, and the most beloved to Allāh is the one who takes care of His children.[14]

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ اسْتَرْعَاهُ اللَّهُ رَعِيَّةً، فَلَمْ يَحُطْهَا بِنَصِيحَةٍ، إِلاَّ لَمْ يَجِدْ رَائِحَةَ الْجَنَّةِ.

Any slave whom Allāh has given the authority of ruling some people who does not look after them in an honest manner will never smell the scent of Paradise.[15]

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[14] This *ḥadīth* is weak. It was reported by Ibn Abid-Dunyā in *Qaḍā' al-Ḥawā'ij* (24), Abū Nu'aym in *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā'* (4/237), and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādi in *Tārīkh al-Baghdād* (6/334).

[15] Reported by al-Bukhāri (7150) and Muslim (142).

Beware of Bearing False Testimony

Beware of bearing false testimony, because it will break a person's back, corrupt his religion, and ensure that his reputation is ruined forever. The first people that will backbite and carry tales about him are those for whom he falsely testified.

The Forbiddance of Bribery

Beware of bribery, because it blinds seeing eyes and diminishes the stature of the dignified.

Music Sows the Seeds of Fitnah (Temptation and Disorder) in the Heart

Beware of music, because music sows the seeds of temptation in the heart and gives birth to evil thoughts in the soul.

Backgammon and Chess are a Waste of Time

Beware of backgammon and chess, because it is the pastime of the unemployed and idle, and the endeavor of the opulent. It wastes time and distracts from obligations. Your time should be more important to you than to use it up on these childish games that serve no purpose. You will be corrupted by these foolish games that cause harm and ruin.

The Forbiddance of Fortunetelling and Astrology

Beware of the predictions of the astrologer and the fortuneteller, because they will remove the one who believes in them from the religion and enter him into the ranks of the apostates.

This should not be confused with the study of the celestial bodies, and the times of the setting of the sun and the moon, etc., attained by way of mathematic concepts. This knowledge is beneficial and is used to determine the direction of the *qiblah* and the times of the prayer. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ﴾

It is He Who has set the stars for you, so that you may guide your course with their help through the darkness of the land and the sea.

[Sūrah al-An'ām 6:97]

He the Almighty also said:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ ۚ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

It is He who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined its phases, that you may know the number of years and the reckoning.

[Sūrah Yūnus 10:5]

Part Two of the Advice

As for the second part of what you must follow and hold onto:

Honoring Your Brother

Both of you must be sincere towards, honor, and take care of one another in private and public, and watch out for each other when apart and together.

Kindness from the Elder to the Younger

The elder of the two of you should be affectionate with his younger brother. The older brother should hasten to everything that his little brother loves, support him in his interests, and be patient regarding his requests.

Respect from the Younger to the Elder

The younger of the two of you must put his older brother before himself, revere him by following his example privately and publicly, and by agreeing with the things he says and does.

Advising Kindly

If you see your brother do something you don't like or make a mistake, then don't show your discontent or publicize his mistakes. Instead, take him aside and explain to him kindly what he did. If he doesn't agree, then follow his view, because there is a greater danger from the evil that may come between you if you differ than the mistake from which you are warning, unless the mistake is concerning the religion. If that is the case, then follow the truth, whatever it is, and continue to advise and guide your brother to what is right as much as you can. In this situation, it is not permissible to show him reverence or respect regarding this mistake.

Preferring Brotherhood Over the Dunyā

Do not prefer anything of the *dunyā* over your brother, so do not be miserly with your brother just to hold on to some material thing, or turn away from him due to some worldly affair or compete with him in gathering wealth. Instead, if one of you is blessed with success in the *dunyā,* then share it with your brother and strive for your brother's wealth to grow as you would your own.

Affection and Unity

Show support, unity, and affection for others until you are known for it. Indeed, this will please your Lord and calm your enemies.

Do not Turn Your Backs on One Another, Nurse Hatred for One Another, or Be Jealous of One Another

Beware of competing with one another, turning your backs on one another, nursing hatred for one another, and being jealous of one another, because these are characteristics that corrupt your life and your religion, lower your standing, diminish your status, degrade you in the eyes of your enemies, and lessen your friends' opinion of you.

Do Not Nullify Your Charity by Reminding People of It and Harming Others

If either of you does something good for your brother or honors him, do not hold your breath waiting for a reward, and don't keep reminding him of what you did, because this is something that creates grudges, causes hatred, spoils the good deed, degrades the perpetrator, and is an indication of enmity, humiliation, and bad intentions.

Do Not Meet Bad Behavior with Bad Behavior

If one of you makes the mistake of abandoning my advice regarding treating his brother well and taking care of him, then the other must remain steadfast upon my advice, be patient and kind to him, and refrain from repeating his actions and following his bad behavior. Because in the end, your patience will be praised and you will gain superiority in this affair, and whatever your brother does to you will have little effect over you.

Unity is a Blessing

Know this! I have seen a people who didn't have wealth or stature, but they improved their situations and raised their stature through unity and mutual support. And indeed, I saw a people whose stature was well known and their wealth was growing, but they were afflicted by trials and humbled by disunity. So be careful not to be like them.

Keeping the Ties of Kinship

You must keep the ties with the sons of your uncles and the members of your household, honoring them, communicating with their elders and their young, sharing with them wealth and stature, persevering upon their correct guidance, frequently visiting them, supporting their affairs, taking care of their elders, being kind to their young, watching over their wealth, hiding their faults, and easing their needs. And this should be done without seeking any reward or recompense. This brings a person seniority in his family and magnifies him in his

household. Keep the ties of kinship even if the tie between you is weak, and bring close those who are distant. Strive to give them their rights, and be careful not to neglect them. Indeed, it was reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

مَنْ أَحَبَّ النَّسأ في الأجل، والسعة فِي الرِزْقِ، فَلْيَصِلْ رَحِمَهُ.

Whoever loves that his life is prolonged and his wealth is increased should keep the ties of kinship.[16]

This is something that dignifies the person and magnifies him in the eyes of the people. I have never known a household to cut one another off or turn their backs on one another except that they were destroyed and their trace wiped away. Likewise, I have never known a household to maintain the ties of kinship and have affection for one another except that they increase, grow, and are blessed in everything they do.

Advice Regarding Neighbors

Then, you must take care of your neighbor, and avoid causing him harm. You must hide his faults and secrets, give him gifts often, and be patient with him. It was reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

ما زال جبريل يوصيني بالجار حتّى ظننتُ أنه سيوَرِّثُهُ.

Jibrīl continued to advise me concerning the neighbor to the extent that I thought he would make him an inheritor.[17]

Neighbors are Family and Kin

Know that neighbors are family and kin, so show love to your neighbors as you would your relatives. Give them their rights when you see them and when you are apart. Give charity to the poor amongst them, and educate those of them that are uneducated.

[16] Reported by al-Bukhāri (2067) and Muslim (2557).

[17] Reported by al-Bukhāri (6014) and Muslim (2624, 2625).

Keeping Relations with Your Father's Friends

Show special care and respect for my brothers and the people I love. Treat them well, honor them, and keep them close. Indeed, 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إنَّ أبرَّ البرِّ أن يصلَ الرجلُ أهلَ وُدِّ أبيه.

The best of deeds is that a man keeps close relations with the people that loved his father.[18]

Honoring Brothers

Treat your brothers with sincerity and dignity, and give them their rights, keep them away from sins, and hide their secrets.

Beware of waiting for a reward from someone you helped, because this erases good deeds, turns lofty deeds into lowly deeds, transforms appreciation into shame, and turns praise into hatred.

Patience Upon the Hardships From the People

You shouldn't treat everyone as a potential enemy, and likewise, not everyone will be an ally. So do not repeat the actions of someone who demands something from you or causes you harm. Instead, be patient as much as you are able, because when a person is patient and tolerant, he is strengthened and aided. Allāh will help whoever is oppressed. This is something I have experienced myself many times.

Trust and Reliance in Allāh

Do not magnify the significance of daily occurrences, because everything comes to an end, everything that is big was once small, and life is short. So wait for the pleasure (of the Hereafter), because waiting for this pleasure is worship. Set your hopes on your Lord and put your trust in Him, because there is happiness in trusting in Him.

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[18] Reported by Muslim (2552) and at-Tirmidhi (1904).

Seeking Help Through Du'ā' (Supplication)

Seek help through *du'ā'* and seek refuge in Allāh in times of difficulty, because *du'ā'* is like a boat that is never wrecked, a group that is never overcome, and a soldier that never flees from battle.

Beware not to overlook this way of thinking or believe or rely on something else, because you will be destroyed and you will lose in the religion and the *dunyā*. You may find that you make *du'ā'* for something, yet you are afflicted by misery and harm. If this happens to you, then increase in your *du'ā'* and implore Allāh with sincerity and tears, because whatever you suffered was earned by your sins and wicked acts. Indeed, your supplications have saved you from many afflictions and tribulations, but you may not realize it.

Appreciating Blessings

If you are granted a blessing, then honor it and appreciate it, and use it to aid you in your obedience and as a reason for worship.

Warning from Having Disdain for Blessings

Beware of having disdain for the blessings from your Lord, lest He abandons you both blameworthy and detested. It is reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

يا عائشة أحسني جوارَ نِعَمِ الله تعالى، فإنها قلّ ما زالت عن قوم، فعادت إليهم.

O 'Ā'ishah, do good when Allāh the Exalted bestows a blessing upon you, because it is rare that blessings are returned to a people from whom they were removed.[19]

Beware that the blessing doesn't overcome you, so you fall short in your appreciation of it, you forget its rights, or you think that you attained it through your own efforts. Then the blessing will become a

[19] This *ḥadīth* is weak. Reported by Ibn Abid-Dunyā in *Ash-Shukr*.

painful punishment and a serious trial.

Obeying Those in Authority in What is Permissible

You must obey those placed in authority above you by Allāh, as long as it does not involve disobedience to Allāh. Indeed, adhering to obedience to Him is one of the most effective ways of protecting yourself from your enemies.

Do Not Rebel Against a Just Ruler

Beware of publicizing your opposition to the ruler and rebelling against him, because that will cause suffering in the short term and disgrace in the long term. Even if you were to be successful in your rebellion against him and were able to depose the ruler, it would be the cause of your own downfall, due to the great sin that you would earn for yourselves and the great unrest you would cause for the people.

Sticking to the Jamā'ah

Stay with the *jamā'ah* and obey them, because an oppressive ruler is more merciful to the people than civil strife and chaos.

Patience With an Oppressive Ruler

Indeed, the one placed in authority over you and the hardship that comes from him is what you have earned for yourselves by your sins, so be patient, control yourself, and seek to remove that difficulty from yourself by way of submission, tolerance, and good manners. If you are unable to do this, you should leave this country until the ruler has changed his attitude towards you and has good intentions for you.

Beware of complaining a lot about the ruler and openly speaking ill of him, because all that will achieve is his anger and resentment towards you both.

Not Vying with the Ruler

Once you have shut these doors that lead to harm and strife, you should be careful not to compete against those who seek to compete against you, because often a person starts off like this, not expecting that his actions will lead him to something disliked or even forbidden. Eventually, it will lead him to a place where he does not want to be: in opposition to the leader who can overpower those who seek to defeat him and overcome those who have enmity towards him.

Removing Yourselves from Discord

If you see anyone opposing those in authority or rebelling against them, then do not be pleased with their actions, distance yourself from them, and close your doors to them until the discord has passed.

Az-Zuhd (Asceticism) in the Dunyā

Beware of chasing after the wealth and vanities of the *dunyā*. You should partake in the *dunyā* with moderation and take only what is sufficient for your needs, because gathering and chasing after wealth takes up your time, causes turmoil in your life, and attracts envy and jealousy from others.

Everyone Who Has a Blessing is Envied

It is hoped that the ruler will make a mistake that will cause him to lose what he holds most dear. The criminal watches him closely, waiting for an opportunity to betray or kill him. The righteous person criticizes him for wealth and lavish celebrations.

His closest friends fear for him, and his brother is angered over his treatment—if he withholds from people, he is forever blamed, and if he gives, no one is ever pleased.

Difficulties of the Dunyā

If either of you is blessed with money, do not place too much impor-

tance in it, because it causes much strife, and it brings no honor to the one who possesses it. In fact, money is not real wealth, because if something was to happen between you and an enemy and you were forced to leave your city, you would have to leave most of it behind.

You Will Only Receive What is Destined for You

If one of you is in need, let him beautify his request, because he will not miss out on what has been written for him and he will not attain what has not been written for him. Indeed, Allāh the Exalted mentioned the advice of His righteous slave to his son in this regard:

﴿ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُن فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴾

"O my son! Even if it be something equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and even if it resides in a rock or in the heavens or in the earth, Allāh will bring it forth. Verily, Allāh is Subtle (in bringing out that grain), Well-Aware (of its place)."

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:16]

Whoever is Close to the Ruler is Tried

Avoid accompanying the ruler as much as you can, and distance yourself from him as much as possible, because distance from him is better than the power you will enjoy by accompanying him. Your friends will be jealous of you if the ruler is happy with you. Your children and your parents will disassociate themselves from you if he is displeased with you. If he withholds from the people, your critics will be many, but if he distributes with abundance, your appreciators will be few.

Accompanying the Ruler Regarding What is Good

If you are tested with having to accompany the ruler or you are called to that out of necessity, then minimize your exposure to wealth and luxury. Do not backbite or slander anyone to the ruler. Do not accuse anyone in his presence. Do not disobey his orders if they are permissible. Do not descend to the disobedience of Allāh for him. Because he will do the same to you, and even if it seems like you are in his good graces, he will not respect you in private.

Do Not Seek Status

Neither of you should desire to be a higher level or status than the people, because belonging to a higher class will not keep you safe or firm in your position.

The Best Ways are Those That are in Moderation

The safest level is the middle class, because the middle class is not overcome by poverty and they do not chase after status. One of the problems with belonging to the highest social level is that one does not hope for more, but fears losing what one has. On the other hand, the middle class hopes for more and there is a cover between them and their apprehensions.

You should try to be at a level low enough to not attract envious eyes, yet high enough that a sincere friend would wish it for you.

Do Not Seek Power and Authority

Neither of you should seek authority, because seeking it brings disgrace, and refusing it when invited is beautiful. However, if either of you is tried by this difficult responsibility, then let him not be affected by the wealth and luxury, and let him not act haughtily. And know that authority does not increase one's status; it only increases one in trials and tribulations. It exposes you to one of two things: either you resign your position and return to your old situation and status, or you continue in your position of authority until people

begin to criticize you and the responsibility becomes heavy upon you. However, if you are successful in your leadership and deserving of the position and you resign from it, it will not diminish your status or position in any way.

Do Not Joke Too Much

Do not joke too much with your brothers and don't be overfamiliar and relaxed with them, because this is usually the characteristic of someone with enmity towards you, and those that have enmity towards you are usually the people that you know.

This is what you should embody, hold on to, and not give up just for a show or a laugh. What seems fun at first will lead to duties being neglected, which will result in feelings of regret for wasting time on something of no benefit.

Luqmān's Advice to His Son

If you forget my advice and its meaning, then you must not forget Luqmān's advice to his son that Allāh the Exalted mentioned in his Book, because indeed it contains all that is good. Allāh said:

﴿ يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ ۖ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِن صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾

"O my son! Perform *aṣ-ṣalāh*, enjoin (people) for *al-ma'rūf* (Islamic monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from *al-munkar* (i.e., disbelief in the oneness of Allāh, polytheism of all kinds, and all that is evil and bad), and bear with patience whatever befalls you. Verily! These are some of the important

commandments ordered by Allāh with no exemption. And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allāh likes not each arrogant boaster. And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walk, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the donkey."

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:17-19]

I sincerely advise you with this last testament, and I know that I could never help you more than Allāh, Lord of the creation. Indeed, the judgment belongs to none but Allāh. I place my trust in Him; He is sufficient for me and the best of trustees.

All praise to Allāh, Lord of creation, I completed this blessed last testament on Thursday, the 7th of Dhul-Ḥijjah in the year 749 AH. And may Allāh send his blessings and peace upon our leader Muḥammad, the seal of the prophets, his noble family, and his distinguished Companions until the Day of Recompense.

Conclusion[20]

All praise be to Allāh, and may the prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh. To proceed:

This was the advice Imām Abū Walīd al-Bāji gave to his two sons. We ask Allāh to make it beneficial for our sons and us.

There are a few points that we would like to highlight from this advice:

- Abū Walīd al-Bāji made this advice when they were still young, before they had yet reached adulthood, because he said: "Once you had both reached an age when the obligations of faith became incumbent upon you, and I realized that you had both reached an age at which one could understand the lesson and the guidance and benefit from learning and knowledge, it became my duty to give you my last testament."

Hence, it is important that education and nurturing begins at an early age, so that it will become firm and the child will grow accustomed to the lessons. Once a child grows up, the nurturing and

[20] By Ibrāhīm Bājis 'Abdul-Majīd.

education becomes less effective. We have seen many fathers bemoan how their children have turned out, and the only reason for it is that they neglected teaching their children while they were still young.

• One can really feel the sincerity in this letter, and we know there is no one more concerned for the wellbeing and benefit of their children than the parents. He said to his sons: "Know that no one will give you better advice than me, and no one is more concerned for you than me. And no one else on this earth can honor me better than the both of you, and there is nothing that will raise my status in the affairs of the religion and the *dunyā* more than you."

• As you can see, this letter is very comprehensive—it mentions all that is good and calls to it, and mentions all that is evil and warns from it.

Teaching by Example

Abū Walīd al-Bāji's concern for his sons was not limited to this advice. Indeed, there is much to consider and learn from the guidance and insights therein supported by the Quranic verses and the noble *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ, but we also see that he tries to teach them by example. Therefore, he wrote a book called *Sunan aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn wa Sunan al-ʿĀbidīn* (*The Ways of the Righteous and the Worshipers*). In it, he describes the life of the Prophet ﷺ, his noble Companions, and the Salaf aṣ-Ṣāliḥ, and there are many lessons to be learned in it. He says in the beginning:

"O my sons, may Allāh grant you success. I have seen how good speech can cure the heart and rectify the soul. Previously, I have authored books of *ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, *uṣūl*, refutation, and other branches of Islamic knowledge. I hoped that these books would guide and aid you, so I decided it was befitting to also compile a book like this one. While compiling this book, I strove—with Allāh's aid—to remove many of the mistakes that are found in books of this type that depart from the way of the people of knowledge, and the exaggerations that are not from the way of the people of truth. In this book, you

will find explanations of concepts that are not readily found in the books of *fiqh*, and lessons from the manners of the Salaf. I began my book with some supplications from the Qur'ān, and followed it with lessons that will soften the hearts and cure stubbornness."

I conclude this book by Abū Walīd al-Bāji with the advice that Ibrāhīm and Ya'qūb gave to their sons ﷷ:

﴿ وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴾

And this (submission to Allāh, Islām) was enjoined by Ibrāhīm (Abraham) upon his sons and by Ya'qūb (Jacob), (saying), "O my sons! Allāh has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except in the faith of Islām (as Muslims—Islamic monotheism)."

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:132]

And with the advice that Allāh's righteous slave, Luqmān, gave to his son:

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾ وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُن فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾ يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا

أَصَابَكَ ۖ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ
لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِن
صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾

And (remember) when Luqmān said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allāh. Verily! Joining others in worship with Allāh is a great *ẓulm* (wrong) indeed."

And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years. Give thanks to Me and to your parents; unto Me is the final destination.

But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.

"O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock or in the heavens or the earth, Allāh will bring it forth. Verily, Allāh is Subtle (in bringing out that grain), Well-Aware (of its place).

"O my son! Perform *aṣ-ṣalāh*, enjoin (people) for *al-ma'rūf* (Islamic monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from *al-munkar* (i.e., disbelief in the oneness of Allāh, polytheism of all kinds, and all that is evil and bad), and bear with patience whatever befalls you. Verily! These are some of the important commandments ordered by Allāh with no exemption.

"And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allāh likes not each arrogant boaster.

"And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the donkey."

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:13-19]

Finally, I supplicate to Allāh ﷻ with the supplications of the prophets ﷺ:

﴿ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِن لَّدُنكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ﴾

O my Lord! Grant me from You, good offspring. You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:38]

﴿ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴾

Our Lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring those who will be the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders for the righteous.

[Sūrah al-Furqān 25:74]

﴿ رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۚ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ ﴾

O my Lord! Make me and my offspring from those who perform *aṣ-ṣalāh*. Our Lord! Accept my *du'ā'*.

[Sūrah Ibrāhīm 14:40]

﴿ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ ﴾

Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and (all) the believers on the Day when the reckoning will be established.

[Sūrah Ibrāhīm 14:41]

﴿ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴾

My Lord! Inspire and bestow upon me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favors, which You have bestowed on me and my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your mercy among Your righteous slaves.

[Sūrah an-Naml 27:19]

﴿ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds, such as please You, and make my offspring good. Truly, I have turned to You in repentance, and truly, I am one of the Muslims.

[Sūrah al-Aḥqāf 46:15]

﴿ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٢﴾ ﴾

Glorified be your Lord, the Lord of honor and power!

(He is free) from what they attribute unto Him! And peace be on the messengers! And all the praise and thanks be to Allāh, Lord of the creation.

[Sūrah aṣ-Ṣāffāt 37:180-182]